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IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY OFFICER TODAY, GENERAL SIR KENETH STRONG, CHAIRMAN JOINT INTELLIGENCE BOARD, DISCUSSED UK ATTITUDES TOWARD BERLIN PROBLEM AND EAST-WEST NEGOTIATIONS. STRONG SAID WESTERN PLANNING APPEARED TO REST ON ASSUMPTION THAT SINCE KHRUSHCHEV DOES NOT WANT WAR HE WOULD BACK DOWN ON BERLIN DEMANDS WHEN FACED WITH FIRM WESTERN POSITION. WHILE THIS MIGHT BE TRUE THERE WAS ABSENCE CONVINCING INDICATIONS KHRUSHCHEV WOULD DO SO AND SITUATION THEREFORE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS. IMPORTANT NOT TO CORNER KHRUSHCHEV BUT TO LEAVE HIM LINE OF RETREAT. STRONG REMARKED IN THIS CONNECTION THAT WHILE SOVIET PEOPLE DID NOT WANT NUCLEAR WAR ANY MORE THAN BRITISH PEOPLE DID, FORMER WERE LESS AFRAID OF IT THAN ARE BRITISH. STRONG RECALLED THAT IN 1939 BRITISH PEOPLE HAD CONCLUDED WAR INEVITABLE AND MUST BE FACED WHILE FRENCH, CONSCIOUS OF OWN WEAKNESS AND VULNERABILITY, HAD BEEN RELUCTANT TO RESORT TO WAR. STRONG THOUGHT THAT POSSIBLY US ATTITUDE TODAY MIGHT BE SIMILAR TO THAT OF BRITISH IN 1939, NAMELY THAT THREAT HAD TO BE MET EVEN IF IT MEANS WAR, WHILE BRITISH NOW PREOCCUPIED AS WERE FRENCH IN 1939, WITH VULNERABILITY OF THEIR POSITION.

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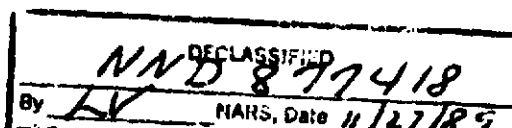
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-2- 5810, MAY 5, 6 PM, FROM LONDON

IN STRONG'S VIEW, AND HE SAID THIS WAS ALSO VIEW OTHER UK OFFICIALS, MAIN WESTERN OBJECTIVES IN BERLIN ARE MAINTENANCE OF RIGHT OF POPULATION TO ENJOY WAY OF LIFE OF OWN CHOOSING AND TO HAVE FREE COMMUNICATION WITH WEST. (SIMILAR LINE TAKEN BY SELWYN LLOYD IN TV INTERVIEW MAY 4 REPORTED EMBTEL 5807) STRONG DID NOT BELIEVE PRESENT WESTERN MILITARY FORCES IN BERLIN ESSENTIAL TO MAINTENANCE LIBERTIES OF WEST BERLIN POPULATION AND THAT UN FORCES COULD BE SUBSTITUTED FOR THEM WITHOUT DANGER PRESERVATION FREEDOM OF CITY. HE REPEATEDLY EMPHASIZED WESTERN FORCES REMAIN IN BERLIN ON SUFFRANCE SOVIET UNION AND THAT THEREFORE WEST SHOULD MAKE EFFORT FIND SOME OTHER ACCEPTABLE BASIS FOR PRESERVATION STATUS WEST BERLIN. IN HIS VIEW DANGER OF FULL SCALE NUCLEAR WAR OVER BERLIN SO GREAT THAT MACMILLAN EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS FULLY UNDERSTANDABLE AND DESERVING OF SUPPORT. HE REMARKED IN PASSING THAT UK CHIEFS OF STAFF PROBABLY MORE WORRIED THAN FOREIGN OFFICE AT WAR DANGERS SURROUNDING BERLIN ISSUE.

STRONG SAID HE WAS CONVINCED MACMILLAN DOES NOT AT PRESENT HAVE ANY PLAN IN MIND FOR RESOLVING BERLIN DISPUTE AND THAT HE IS HOPING "SOMETHING WILL TURN UP" IN COURSE OF NEGOTIATIONS AT SUMMIT. STRONG EMPHASIZED THAT MACMILLAN CONTINUES ATTACH PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE TO ANGLO-AMERICAN ALLIANCE AND THAT HIS EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT EAST-WEST NEGOTIATIONS PROMPTED BY NO MUNICH SPIRIT BUT RATHER BY CONVICTION THAT IN NUCLEAR AGE EAST-WEST DIFFERENCES MUST BE RESOLVED THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS. WHILE HE THOUGHT ANGLO-AMERICAN DIFFERENCES HAD BEEN EXAGGERATED BY PRESS NEVERTHELESS HIGH-LEVEL FLIGHTS TO BERLIN HAD IN FACT BEEN REGARDED WITHIN BRITISH GOVERNMENT AS "ILL-TIMED". FURTHERMORE RECENT STATEMENTS BY AMERICAN MILITARY LEADERS HAD APPEARED UNNECESSARILY BELLIGERENT. IN THIS CONNECTION STRONG EXPRESSED REGRET THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN BRITISH CHIEFS OF STAFF AND AMERICAN COUNTERPARTS WERE NOT MORE INTIMATE SINCE THIS WOULD SERVE TO REMOVE OR MINIMIZE MISUNDERSTANDINGS. (GENERAL STRONG ASKED THAT HE NOT BE QUOTED ON THIS POINT).

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